

Application No. 10/671,764

PATENT  
Docket No. 58934-010300RECEIVED  
CENTRAL FAX CENTER  
JUL 11 2006**AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS****Claim 1 (Currently amended):** A tunnel port apparatus comprising:a guideneedle assembly having a guarded needle tip;a blunt-tip port cannula overlying said guideneedle assembly, said port cannula having a valve apparatus with a serial gas-check assembly;~~an~~ a tapered blunt obturator rod within said port cannula and overlying said guideneedle assembly; and

a support frame including an elongated member portion having proximal and distal ends and from which support members extend therefrom supporting said guideneedle assembly and port cannula.

**Claim 2 (Original):** The apparatus of claim 1 wherein said guideneedle assembly is joined to said support frame at said proximal end of said support frame.**Claim 3 (Original):** The apparatus of claim 1 wherein said serial gas-check assembly comprises at least one apertured membrane and a non-return valve.**Claim 4 (Original):** The apparatus of claim 1 wherein said support frame includes a track along at least a portion of said elongated member portion**Claim 5 (Original):** The apparatus of claim 1 wherein said obturator rod has a cap at its proximal end.**Claim 6 (Original):** The apparatus of claim 5 wherein said cap further comprises at least one extension member.**Claim 7 (Original):** The apparatus of claim 6 wherein said at least one extension member is a guide that follows a track in said support frame.**Claim 8 (Original):** The apparatus of claim 6 wherein said at least of extension member is a push tab.**Claim 9 (Original):** The apparatus of claim 1 wherein said support frame includes at least one disconnect site along said elongated member portion.

Application No. 10/671,764

PATENT  
Docket No. 58934-010300

**Claim 10 (Currently amended):** The apparatus of claim 1 wherein said ~~guideneedle~~  
guideneedle assembly includes a hollow core guideneedle.

**Claim 11 (Original):** The apparatus of claim 10 wherein said hollow core guideneedle includes a solid core obturator needle.

**Claim 12 (Original):** The apparatus of claim 1 further comprising a disconnect site.

**Claim 13 (Original):** The apparatus of claim 1 further comprising a locking mechanism along said elongated member portion of said support frame.

**Claim 14 (Withdrawn):** A method for obtaining access to an internal space, comprising:

- preparing a subject for surgery;
- providing a tunnel port apparatus comprising a support frame having separable proximal and distal portions and a disconnect site, said tunnel port apparatus having a valve apparatus with a serial gas-check assembly;
- inserting a guideneedle through an incision;
- advancing a port cannula and obturator rod over the guideneedle into said internal space;
- disconnecting said proximal and distal portions of said frame;
- withdrawing said hollow core guideneedle and obturator rod; and
- leaving said port cannula with said distal portion of said frame to provide access to said internal space.

**Claim 15 (Withdrawn)** The method of claim 14 wherein said insertion is at a skin incision.

**Claim 16 (Withdrawn)** The method of claim 14 further comprising the step of providing a laparoscopic port.

**Claim 17 (Withdrawn)** The method of claim 14 wherein said internal space is a peritoneal space.

**Claim 18 (Withdrawn)** The method of claim 17 wherein said insertion of said guideneedle is inserted through at least one muscular layer.

Application No. 10/671,764

PATENT  
Docket No. 58934-010300

**Claim 19 (Withdrawn)** The method of claim 18 wherein said muscular layer is an anterior rectus muscle.

**Claim 20 (Withdrawn)** The method of claim 18 further comprising the step of angling said guideneedle towards a pelvis.

**Claim 21 (Withdrawn)** The method of claim 14 further comprising the step of introducing a catheter to said internal space via said port cannula.

**Claim 22 (Withdrawn)** The method of claim 14 further comprising the step of introducing a shunt.

**Claim 23 (Withdrawn)** The method of claim 20 wherein said angling results in forming a tunnel through said sheath.

**Claim 24 (Withdrawn)** The method of claim 14 wherein said internal space is a gastrointestinal space.

**Claim 25 (Withdrawn)** The method of claim 14 wherein said internal space is at least one of a hollow viscus, abscess and lymphocele.

**Claim 26 (Withdrawn)** The method of claim 14 wherein said serial gas check assembly comprises at least one apertured member and at least one non-return valve.

**Claim 27 (Currently amended)** A tunnel port apparatus comprising:

a support frame including an elongated member portion having a proximal support member and an apertured distal support member extending from said elongated member portion, said elongated member portion including a track;

a guideneedle assembly having a guarded needle attached to said proximal support member; and

Application No. 10/671,764

PATENT  
Docket No. 58934-010300

a blunt-tip port cannula over said guideneedle assembly and supported by said apertured distal support member, said port cannula having a valve apparatus with a serial gas-check assembly.